

## There he goes again

After President Reagan went on television yesterday morning to tell the American people that some 1900 Marines and Army Rangers had invaded the Caribbean island of Grenada, the former director of the CIA, Admiral Stansfield Turner, was asked to explain the purpose of such a retrograde colonialist venture. Though he acknowledged that Grenada represents a "minor threat" to the United States, Turner did not hesitate to tell the early-morning audience that there was a need to prevent the advance of Marxism and communism.

Turner then said something bizarre. He said that, since Grenada had not been ruled democratically, there was no way of knowing what the people there really wanted. Therefore, he said, when the time comes to turn the government back to the Grenadans, the United States could be embarrassed if they don't want to change their government.

Turner's anxiety about future shock amounted to an inadvertent revelation of the arrogance that underlies Reagan's invasion of Grenada. The guiding assumption behind the operation is that Reagan and his advisers have the right to decide what kind of regimes can, and cannot, exist in this hemisphere.

The Reagan Administration has not hesitated, however, to embrace fascistic military juntas in countries like El Salvador, Chile and Argentina; to put the US government stamp of approval on death squads, torture chambers,

book burning and rule by secret police terror.

In the days to come, Americans will be asking: Why did Reagan invade Grenada? The justifications he offered on television yesterday must be judged more as pretexts than as genuine reasons. There was no danger to the lives of the 1000 Americans on the island. In fact, the director of the US medical school in the capital city, St. George's, said that the Marine landing created a danger where none had existed.

The wish to "forestall further chaos" is disingenuous. Reagan and his advisers refused to reach an accommodation with the assassinated former Prime Minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, when he traveled to Washington last June in an overt effort to work out some *modus vivendi* with America. Hence Reagan may have been partly responsible for the "chaos" he now decries.

An American Administration that certifies progress on human rights every six months in blood-drenched El Salvador can hardly expect to be granted the moral or political authority to "assist in the restoration of conditions of law and order" in Grenada. Compared with the governmental gangsterism Reagan has tolerated in "friendly" dictatorships in this hemisphere, the recent struggle for power on Grenada seems like a Saturday night gang fight.

Reagan's invasion of Grenada represents a shameful and senseless misuse of American power.